

PETER ALDOUS MP

(WAVENEY)



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

10 July 2019

County Cllr Kevin Bentley  
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure  
Essex County Council  
County Hall  
Market Road  
Chelmsford  
Essex CM1 1QH

Dear Kevin

Major Road Network (MRN) and Large Local Major (LLM) Schemes – Proposed A146 "Barnby Bends" Bypass, Near Lowestoft, Suffolk

I write in support of Suffolk County Council's submission to Transport East for consideration of prioritisation of the "Barnby Bends" scheme, on the A146 between Lowestoft and Beccles, for Major Road Network funding. The initial work will be to prepare a Strategic Outline Business Case with a request for funding to enable to scheme to be progressed further to develop the Outline Business Case.

This is a scheme for which plans have been prepared in the past and now is an appropriate time to remove a dangerous pinch-point on the main road network.

There are many compelling reasons for doing this which can be summarised as follows:-

1. *The A416 is now part of the Major Road Network.* This section links Lowestoft to Beccles and from there to Norwich and via the A143 at Gillingham to Diss and to the A14 at Bury St Edmunds. It is a vitally important East-West link and would "seamlessly" help improve connections from Lowestoft to other major conurbations and significant centres. It would complement well the Strategic Road Network.
2. *A "Barnby Bends" Bypass would stimulate economic growth.* As well as improving road connections regionally and nationally it would have a positive local impact, providing a good quality road link from Lowestoft to Beccles and it would complement other road schemes, such as the Beccles Southern Relief Road which was opened in September 2018 and the Lowestoft Third Crossing, for which the Examination in Public has just finished and on which construction is due to begin either later this year or in early 2020.

The section of the A146 on which the "Barnby Bends" are located links Beccles and its growing industrial estate which includes Ellough Airfield, to Lowestoft and then via the

A47 to Great Yarmouth. There are six sites in the Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft Enterprise Zone, one of which is at Ellough. The remainder are in and around Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth.

The bypass would provide a seamless link through the Lowestoft/Great Yarmouth sub-region, which would stimulate economic growth by linking these six sites. This is particularly important at a time when we are looking to encourage business to move to and expand in the area, in particular in the energy sector, where there are significant opportunities offshore as the transformation to a zero carbon economy gathers pace.

3. A "*Barnby Bends*" bypass would deliver significant safety benefits. There is a long history of serious accidents on the Bends themselves and the junction with Barnby/North Cove is becoming more dangerous as the amount of traffic increases.

The scheme would also improve community cohesion in Barnby itself where several dwellings are in effect "divorced" from the rest of the village. This includes the Church, to which it can be difficult and dangerous for elderly parishioners to reach.

4. The scheme would alleviate congestion on what has long been a busy road where the amount of traffic is likely to increase due to the proposed large residential developments at Carlton Colville and Worlingham/Beccles. At times of heavy rainfall, when flooding can occur, the traffic moves particularly slowly.

5. There would be significant environmental benefits associated with the Bypass as it would move traffic away from the Broads National Park and a designated European Protected Site. It would provide an opportunity for environmental enhancement and an increase in "green" tourism, complementing well Suffolk Wildlife Trust's exciting plans at nearby Carlton Marshes.

6. The bypass would provide a significant opportunity to improve the provision for non-motorised road users, increasing the reliability of the bus service from Lowestoft via Beccles to Norwich and also to upgrade facilities for cyclists and pedestrians.

The disused road could be used for such purposes and there is the potential to upgrade the public footpath network in the surrounding area.

7. The scheme would help alleviate some of the pressures that planned developments will impose on the local road network. As mentioned above, there are significant housing developments planned at Carlton Colville and Worlingham/Beccles, as well as 50 additional houses proposed at Barnby.

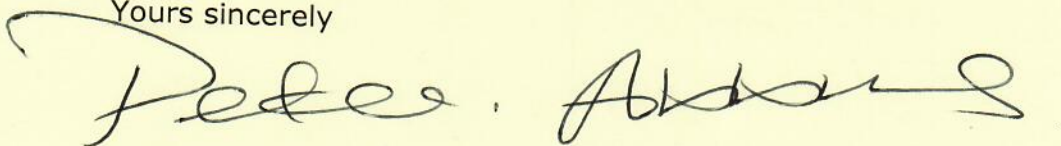
8. *This is a scheme that could be carried out relatively quickly and could be fast-tracked if necessary. Whilst the business case and full plans have yet to be prepared, previous schemes can be readily updated and adapted to take account of recent developments, many of which I have outlined. This is a scheme of just under two miles in length which would be constructed on relatively well drained land and there are no obvious physical constraints to address.*

9. *The "Barnby Bends" Bypass is a project for which there has been longstanding community support. It is supported by East Suffolk Council in their recently approved Waveney Local Plan. It would remove a longstanding accident black spot and it would be a catalyst for economic growth.*

I do hope that you are able to support the scheme and do let me know if you need clarification on any matters.

Best wishes,

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Aldous', with a large, sweeping flourish at the beginning.

Peter Aldous  
Member of Parliament for Waveney